

**PERSONAL DATA QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR IOWA STATE JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION
Adopted December, 2010**

NOTE TO APPLICANTS: On advice of legal counsel, the Commission will treat the responses to this questionnaire as a public record available upon request for public examination. If you believe you cannot fully respond to a question without disclosing information that is confidential under state or federal law, please submit that part of your answer with the legal basis for confidentiality on a separate sheet that you mark confidential.

In answering these questions, please repeat each question and place your answer immediately beneath it. Send your completed questionnaire to the Commission's Secretary and each member of the Commission as soon as possible since it is a prerequisite to consideration of your candidacy.

1. State your full name: **Sharon Soorholtz Greer.**

2. State your current occupation/title (Lawyers identify name of firm, organization, or government agency; judicial officers identify court):

I am a partner in the law firm of Cartwright, Druker & Ryden.

3. Age: **57 years old.**

4. City of your residence: **Marshalltown, Iowa 50158.**

5. State the periods of your military service, if any, including active duty, reserves or other status. Give the date, branch of service, your rank or rating and your present status.

I have not served in the military.

6. List each college and law school you attended, including the dates of attendance, the degree awarded, and your reason for leaving each school if no degree from that institution was awarded.

Iowa State University: 1974- 1978 – Double degrees in Psychology and Child Development.

Moorhead College, in association with Iowa State University: Summer of 1977 – teaching abroad in England.

University of Iowa: 1979 – 1982 – Juris Doctorate.

7. List all courts in which you are presently admitted to practice, including the dates of admission in each case. Give the same information for administrative bodies having special admission requirements.

**Iowa Supreme Court and Iowa Courts: 1982
Federal Court: Southern District of Iowa: 1982, 2006.**

8. Describe chronologically your work experience, including your law practice experience, including with respect to your law experience:
- Whether you served as a clerk to a judge, and if so, the name of the judge, the court, and the dates of the period you were a clerk.
 - Whether you practiced alone, and if so, the addresses and the dates.
 - The dates, names and addresses of law firms or offices, companies or governmental agencies with which you have been connected, and the nature of your connection with each.
 - Any other relevant particulars.

Work Experience:

Pre-college work (1970-1974): De-tasseled corn, walked beans, life-guarded, cleaned homes and the Melbourne tavern, taught swimming lessons, and sold clothing at a department store.

College Work (1974-1978): Treasurer at Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority. Waitress work at local Ames diner. Summers working as described in pre-college work.

Bankers Life (1978-1979). Account Representative. Pension and Profit Sharing Department.

Law School Work: (1980): Marshall County Clerk of Court, general office work. (1981-1982): Clerked for Johnson, Carter, Latham & Peglow Law Firm, 118 East Main, Marshalltown, Iowa 50158. (1982): Legal Research Assistant to Professor Alan Widiss.

Post Law School Work:

(1982-1986): Associate at Greer, Nelson, Bertell, Barry, Montgomery & Bovee Law Firm, 403 Second Avenue West, Spencer, Iowa 51301.

(1986-Current): Associate until 1992, Partner at Cartwright, Druker & Ryden Law Firm, 112 West Church Street, Marshalltown, Iowa 50158.

9. a. What has been the general character of your legal experience, dividing it into periods with dates if its character has changed over the years?

I have always worked in a small county seat firm in a rural Iowa setting. My general practice area is litigation, with the luxury of also having a general practice with a great deal of variety.

- b. Generally describe your typical clients, and mention the areas, if any, in which you have focused.

I have a regional trial practice that allows me to try cases in many of our state judicial districts. I often defend individuals or corporations that have been sued and I am hired by various insurance companies to handle these matters. My practice also involves bringing lawsuits for plaintiffs who are owed money, have been personally injured or have been damaged by someone's negligence. My practice involves individuals and companies that are located in a several county area, primarily rural. For my local clientele, I often bring lawsuits to resolve disputes, negotiate contracts or handle various legal matters. My local clients represent all occupations that would exist in a rural setting. At any given time, I have a diverse client base of construction companies, insurance companies, farmers, business owners, individuals and I have even served as the attorney for children in juvenile or family law matters.

10. With respect to your legal experience:

- a. Did you appear in court or other tribunals regularly, occasionally or not at all? If the frequency of your appearances has varied during this period, describe each such variance, giving the dates thereof.

I have been in state court for the vast majority of my career, but I have also handled many administrative matters. This has been consistent for the entire term of my career.

- b. What percentage of these appearances was in:

i. Federal courts	2%
ii. State courts of record	95%
iii. Other tribunals	3%

- c. What percentage of your litigation was:

i. Administrative	3%
ii. Civil	90%
iii. Criminal	8%

- d. State the approximate number of cases or contested matters you tried to conclusion (rather than settled) within the last 10 years, indicating whether you were sole counsel, chief counsel, or associate counsel.

In the last 10 years, I have tried 60 civil jury trials and 68 non-jury civil matters. I have been lead/sole counsel in all of these cases. I just finished a criminal jury trial last month.

- e. What percentage of these trials were:

i. Jury	45%
ii. Non-jury	55%

- f. Describe to what extent your practice has been in areas other than appearances before courts or other tribunals. State the nature of your practice, including the approximate percentage of time spent in each area of practice.

I spend the majority of my practice trying cases in the civil area, but I am a small county seat lawyer and I am honored to help clients with a vast array of legal matters. For example, during the past 12 months a sampling of my legal work included: closing a large three million dollar estate, trying a criminal case, navigating the transition of a family business, negotiating a farm lease dispute, managing the legal work for a small city as city attorney, handling a contempt to obtain a college subsidy for a client, and providing advice on employment matters to several corporations. My practice varies each year, but generally I spend 60% doing civil trial work, 10% in the family law area, 5% handling construction/business law matters, 5% working with estates/trusts and estate planning, 5% providing municipal law guidance, 5% in agricultural law matters, 5% defending clients in criminal matters, and 5% handling office practice/real estate/hospital law/school law matters. Areas of practice in the civil arena have included: drainage disputes in residential developments and on a golf course, a spray drift case involving a vineyard, a pharmaceutical malpractice action, a number of general car accident matters – including wrongful death actions, slip and fall cases, nursing home negligence cases, employment law matters, defense of an attorney in the disciplinary process, explosion cases, insurance coverage cases and injury at a casino, just to name a sampling of my case load this year. Clearly, I continue to learn something new every day in the preparation of a case.

11. Describe three of the most significant legal matters which you have personally handled. If they were litigated matters, give the citations if available. Give a capsule summary of the substance of each matter, and a succinct statement of what you believe to be the particular significance of it. Identify the party or parties whom you represented; describe in detail the nature of your participation and its outcome. State as to each matter (a) the dates of your involvement, (b) the individual name and address of co-counsel and of counsel for each of the other parties, and (c) as to any litigated matter, the name of the court and the judge before whom the case was tried. If the matter was confidential, please avoid the use of any information that may allow disclosure of the identity of the parties.

Thompson v. Kaczinski, 774 N.W.2d 829 (Iowa 2009): I represented the landowners in this case involving injuries sustained by motorist Thompson. Kaczinski removed the top of a trampoline and left it in his yard. A storm blew through in the early morning hours lifting the trampoline onto the roadway. As Thompson came over the rural gravel road hill, he swerved to miss the trampoline and rolled his vehicle several times in the ditch sustaining injuries. Randy Hefner of Adel, Iowa (now a Judge in Judicial District 5) represented Thompson.

Significance: Iowa Supreme Court adopted the Restatement (Third) of Torts – Liability for Physical and Emotional Harm. The outcome was the same irrespective of the change in the law.

On March 24, 2008, Judge Darrell Goodhue granted my request for summary judgment dismissing the case against Kaczinski. The Iowa Court of Appeals affirmed Judge Goodhue on December 17, 2008, and the Iowa Supreme Court on November 13, 2009, changed the Iowa law and determined that the issues were to be resolved by

a jury and not by summary judgment. Hefner and I tried the case before Judge Paul Huscher and a Dallas County jury returned a defense verdict in favor of the landowners on October 10, 2010.

CIETC: To showcase the diversity of my practice, a non-litigation matter that was significant to our State involved my investigation skills. In May of 2006, to facilitate an ongoing investigation by the Iowa legislature into activities of various individuals involving CIETC board activities, I was hired along with Richard (Dick) Sapp of the Nyemaster firm in Des Moines and Tim Bottaro of the Vriezelaar firm in Sioux City to assist in the fact-finding. We conducted numerous interviews and collected a number of documents. The Legislative Oversight Committee sought advice and guidance for hearings and the important collection of testimony. I helped formulate the structure of the investigation and analyze the problem of non-profit board oversight for the State of Iowa.

Significance: This work lead to several legislative changes for Iowa in the areas of ethics in government employment, the structure of non-profit corporations and oversight of such corporate boards. The material we collected, along with the excellent work of the Oversight Committee, highlighted the potential problems non-active board members pose for non-profit groups.

State v. V.S.: In 1991, I represented a young woman charged with felony theft. Her career goal was to become an accountant and with this conviction, we knew she would have difficulty pursuing that path. She arrived in my office after providing a loss prevention specialist from a national chain retailer a signed confession of the alleged theft of a significant amount of store inventory. The Marshall County Attorney charged my client with felony theft and we proceeded to trial on April 2, 1991. Believing the confession was coerced and truly knowing that my client was innocent, there was no choice but to try the case and not accept a plea deal. The jury acquitted my client of any wrongdoing.

Significance: While cases or legal matters may be significant on a broad state level, this matter emphasizes the importance of our work to the people we represent and the heavy burden we face as litigators. We cannot forget the dire ramifications the law imposes on those wrongly accused. Not only did we win this case, but for me, it was the first time I ever had a jury return a verdict and then have jurors hug me and my client. I have had many successful verdicts posted on national web sites, but none have ever felt as satisfying as this acquittal.

12. a. Have you ever held judicial office? If so, give dates and details including the courts involved, whether elected or appointed, periods of service, and a description of the jurisdiction of each of such courts with any limitations upon the jurisdiction of each court.

No.

- b. If during the preceding five years you have been subject to the reporting requirements

of Court Rule 22.10, answer the following and provide an explanation of the reasons for any delay:

- i. Have you filed timely rule 22.10 reports (due on the tenth day of each month)?
- ii. How many matters have you taken under advisement for longer than 120 days?
- iii. How many matters have you taken under advisement for longer than 180 days?
- iv. How many matters have you taken under advisement for longer than 240 days?
- v. How many matters have you taken under advisement for longer than a year?

Not applicable to my career.

13. Have you ever held public office other than judicial office? If so, give details, including the office involved, whether elected or appointed, and the length of your service, giving dates.

No.

14. Are you now an officer, director, partner, sole proprietor, or otherwise engaged in the management of any business enterprise or nonprofit organization? If so, give details, including the name of the enterprise or organization, the nature of the business, the title or other description of your position, the nature of your duties and the term of your service.

I serve as the treasurer for our non-profit neighborhood association (503C organization) established as the Hughes Grove Historic Neighborhood Association. There is no set term.

I serve as president of SATUCI, a not for profit substance abuse treatment group in Marshalltown, Iowa, and I have been a board member since the 1990's.

I am also the vice-chair of the Marshall Economic Development Impact Committee (MEDIC) and am serving my three year term on the Board.

I am a Trustee at the Marshalltown Medical & Surgical Center.

15. Have you ever been convicted or pled guilty to any federal law or regulation, state law or regulation, county or municipal law, regulation or ordinance, excluding convictions that have been properly expunged? If so, give details and disposition. Do not include traffic violations for which a fine of \$250 or less was imposed, unless you were arrested.

Never.

16. Have you ever been assessed or threatened with the assessment of a civil fraud or any criminal penalty in connection with the reporting of or failure to report your federal or state income taxes? If so, give particulars.

Never.

17. Have you ever been the subject of a no-contact order?

Never.

18. Have you ever been a party to any legal proceedings? If so, give the particulars.

No.

19. Have you ever been publicly disciplined or cited for a breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by any court, administrative agency, bar association, disciplinary committee, or other professional group? If so, give the particulars.

Never.

20. Furnish at least two examples of legal articles, books, briefs, or other legal writings which reflect your personal work. Indicate the degree to which they represent your personal work. Please do not provide writing samples that would disclose confidential information, such as a brief submitted in an involuntary commitment proceeding, unless identifying information is removed to obscure the identity of the parties and any information that may allow disclosure of the identity of the parties.

Please find the attached samples of my work product involving appeals that I have handled as lead counsel.

21. List any honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received (including any indication of academic distinction in college or law school) other than those mentioned in answers to the foregoing questions.

Attached is my Curriculum Vitae which provides my educational honors and activities and provides an exhaustive list that I have maintained through the years. However, there are a few awards that are special to me: I was the recipient of the Iowa Chapter of the NCPCA Award for Outstanding Contributions to Child Abuse Prevention in 1992. I proudly accepted the Governor's Volunteer Award in 1993, 1996 and in 2006. In 1999, I was the first woman to receive the Edward F. Seitzinger Award as the outstanding board member for exceptional contributions and meritorious service to the Iowa Defense Counsel. At the Iowa Bar Association annual meeting in 2004, the President's Community Service Award was presented to me as the District 2B representative. In 2005, the national award from the Defense Research Institute for Outstanding State Defense Organization President was awarded to me, the first Iowan to ever receive this award.

22. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you are a member and give the titles and dates of any such offices which you have held in such groups. List all chairmanships of any committees in bar associations and professional societies, and memberships on any committees which you believe to be of particular significance (e.g., grievance committee).

I am a member of the Marshall County Bar Association, Iowa State Bar Association and the American Bar Association. I was on the Executive Council of the Young Lawyers Division of the Iowa Bar Association from 1985-86 and 1989-91. In 1986, I chaired the Young Lawyers Summer Seminar. Other service to the Iowa Bar Association include council member of the Continuing Legal Education Section (1990-91), member of the Iowa Bar Association Legislative Committee (1989-90) and council member of the Iowa Bar Association Litigation Section (1991-94). My role included chairing the Litigation Section over two years in 2008 – 2010.

As a law student/young lawyer and with my background in farming, I was involved in the American Agricultural Law Association (1982-85), serving as its first student speaker at the first annual conference.

My involvement with the Iowa Defense Counsel began in 1998 as a member of the Board of Directors. I served as President of the organization from 2004-2005. I have served on numerous committees and presented at the seminars frequently.

Service to the Iowa Supreme Court began in 1986 when I was a member of the Supreme Court Law Library Advisory Committee. The Court appointed me to the Supreme Court Commission on Continuing Legal Education in 1986 and I chaired that commission from 1990 until 1995. In 1988, I was involved with the Supreme Court Sesquicentennial Celebration Committee. Finally, I was honored to be asked to chair the Iowa Supreme Court Ethical Rules Drafting Committee in 2000 and that effort continued for several months. I chaired the Iowa Supreme Court Monitoring Committee charged with reviewing the ethical rules on a periodic basis. Starting in 2010, I am participating in the Supreme Court Civil Justice Reform Task Force as a committee member.

Recently, I was asked to serve on the Board of the Iowa Academy of Trial Lawyers, which is open to only 250 lawyers in Iowa by invitation only.

23. Describe any participation you have had in pro bono legal activities and include dates.

It is common for me to provide pro bono services for clients on a regular basis. For example, two weeks ago I drafted a power of attorney to a client who has special needs so that her mother could help in case of an emergency. I often reduce my rates or provide free representation for women who are single mothers and cannot afford my regular services or for persons serving in the military.

24. Describe your activities in organizations other than bar associations or professional associations or professional societies, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations.

I am a member of the First Congregational Church. I attended the National Security Forum at the US Air Force War College in May of 2002. In our city, I served on Marshalltown's Chamber of Commerce for a 3 year term starting in 2002. For over 18 years, I have served on the City of Marshalltown's Planning & Zoning Commission and I am a Board Member of the Substance Abuse and Treatment Unit of Central Iowa (SATUCI). I have been a member of Marshalltown's Rotary Club for a number of years.

In previous years, I have been involved in the American Association of University Women, both at the local and state level. In 1997 through 2000, I was a board member of Mediation and Community Services in Marshall County. In the school system, I have served on several committees including a facilities committee and a math advisory committee. From 1987 through 1993, I was active as a board member, and later president, of our Iowa River Hospice organization. Finally, over several years, the local Area Council on Child Abuse and Neglect utilized my skills as a board member, secretary and president.

In earlier years, I coached our daughters' soccer teams and chaired the fund-raising committee that built our soccer club's \$70,000 building. The main entrance to

downtown Marshalltown is over a railroad viaduct that had fallen into disrepair. A city councilwoman and I organized a community paint-a-thon of the bridge that drew out over 900 volunteer painters on a 95 degree day.

After years of gentle persuasion, I directed a special task force charged with implementing a Property Maintenance Code for our city. This is a special interest of mine. I have also served on a Chamber Housing Committee that focuses on community improvement and revitalization. The Mayor of Marshalltown recently appointed me to an Enterprise Zone Committee to review special projects in the city. Additionally, in 2008, I was asked to join the Marshall Economic Development Impact Committee (MEDIC) and I just finished serving as the Chair of that organization.

25. List not more than five names and addresses of those persons who are in a position to comment upon your qualifications for judicial position and of whom inquiry may be made by members of the Commission without embarrassment to you.

Samuel Anderson
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(319) 232- 6555

Joel Yunek
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Mark Brownlee
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Robert Houghton
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Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401
(319) 365-9461

Jennifer Miller
Marshall County Courthouse
One East Main Street
Marshalltown, Iowa 50158
(641) 754-6314

26. Why are you seeking this position?

My career has been extensive and always has involved an element of service. I believe it would be an honor to serve the citizens of Iowa in a new role. I would enjoy the challenge that writing and analyzing cases would bring me. It is also essential that

the appellate courts maintain a balance of experience representative of the court process. Currently, our Court of Appeals does not have that balance. Selection of an active litigator would bring that perspective to the decision making process and I could provide that perspective. Lawyers and Judges continually encourage me to apply and I respect that trust. Since I provide guidance on a daily basis to clients, I would enjoy the opportunity to resolve disputes on a statewide level and make a difference to people beyond my current experience.

27. How would your appointment enhance the court?

I intend to bring a strong work ethic to the Court. My work ethic developed on an Iowa farm with four sisters and my parents. We were all nurtured and expected to achieve in the work world, in the community and in our families.

It is important for the Court to have a representative from the practicing bar who has a strong background in the trial area and experience in a number of legal areas. I know the anatomy of a trial by serving in the trenches making the record and understanding the pressures of a law practice. My small town practice provides a different perspective because I am continually visible and accountable in my community. I have not specialized so exclusively that I am limited in experience. I have dealt with clients and their problems for over 30 years and the Court should not forget the consumer of services – the litigant. I would add that perspective to this Court.

Because of my wide breadth of experiences practicing with clients of all types, I have an ability to become more productive more quickly. I do not have a paralegal or clerk to help with my workload and I find that I can research and write efficiently. My practice allows me a strong working knowledge of many areas of the law. Today I am managing cases in involving tort law, employment law, family law, trust law, estate law, nursing home law, malpractice matters, contract law, construction law, criminal law, insurance law, premises law, wrongful death matters, agricultural law and real estate law. Along with these litigated matters, my desk practice involves business law and numerous other areas that change year to year. It is common for me to work 2400 hours as billable time and hundreds of hours of non-billable, volunteer time. I have been labeled the “energizer bunny” by many who know me! I benefit from each person I touch and I would bring that energy to a Court that maintains a high volume work load.

Finally, I see myself as a visible and active appellate judge. I practice in many counties in Iowa. I have a wonderful relationship with the majority of judges in this state and can walk into most courthouses in Iowa and know many attorneys and court staff. My philosophy would be to actively pursue contact with the public and lawyers. I believe it is the Court's obligation to be involved and participate in public activities where it is appropriate for the Court to be. This enhances public perception and provides more open access to the state's court. I would solicit interaction from consumers of the court system - litigants, lawyers and judges.

28. State any other information which may reflect positively on you or which you believe would assist the Commission in selecting nominees.

Please review my Curriculum Vitae for an understanding of the breadth of experience and background.

Submission of this questionnaire expresses my willingness to accept appointment to the position of Justice of the Iowa (Court of Appeals), if tendered by the Governor.

Dated August 7, 2013

Signed 